Dear Athletes,
Welcome to Beijing for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad.

For two weeks, you are going to experience something exceptional, something unique – something that I was lucky enough to experience some years ago as an athlete and that I continue to experience today as President of the IOC.

These Games in Beijing are yours: they are your history, your dream, your supreme reward after all the years of effort and determination.

It is up to you to make them a success, whether through your performances or your conduct – by respecting each other and defending clean sport.

For you are more than champions. You are also role models, examples for the young people of today and tomorrow.

So in this special “Beijing” edition, the IOC Athletes’ Commission invites you to make your voice heard, and to share and pass on the fundamental values of sport, of which you are the best ambassadors.

Because these values that sport can teach – excellence, friendship and respect – are undoubtedly more important than ever in today’s world. Good luck to every one of you in Beijing!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE IOC: JACQUES ROGGE

Dear Fellow Olympians,
Welcome to Beijing for what will be 16 days of competition, emotion and shared excitement!

Here in Beijing, you are going to live the dream of all of us: to take part in the Olympic Games, the ultimate goal for any athlete after many years of hard work and sacrifice.

The whole world will be watching you giving the best of yourselves, and living your joys and sorrows. You will thus be sharing this dream with millions of spectators, including millions of young people on all five continents, for whom you are heroes and role models. And, believe me, I know what this means, having been lucky enough to compete in four Olympic Games.

Today, you all know that an athlete (an Olympian) is, more than ever, a world citizen belonging to a family promoting its own ideal, the sporting ideal. It is therefore important that, as you have the right to take part in the Olympic Games, you have also the right and the responsibility to play an active role in the whole area of sport. So take the opportunity to raise your issues and express your concerns by electing four representatives on the IOC Athletes’ Commission, “your voice” within the Olympic Movement. Vote and make a difference!

Just like your colleagues in Athens in 2004 and Turin in 2006, you will have the opportunity of making one more difference to the lives of people in need worldwide by giving clothes or equipment and also by raising awareness of the danger of HIV/AIDS. Without forgetting having an exemplary attitude during the Games, respecting others and competing with no doping, thus preserving ethics in sport. Please continue to be ambassadors of sport and its values on and off the field of sport so that the dream of taking part in the Olympic Games will be perpetuated throughout the young generation! Good luck to all of you in Beijing!

A WORD FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN: SERGEY BUBKA

Thirty athletes, representing as many countries, are candidates for the IOC Athletes’ Commission elections, which will be held during the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008.

Four of the thirty (30) candidates will be elected by vote and will become members of the Athletes’ Commission for a term of eight years. After acceptance by the IOC Session, they will also become IOC members for the same duration as their term-of-office on the Commission.

All the athletes participating in the Games in 2008 will be able to vote. For an athlete’s ballot to be valid, an athlete must vote for four (4) candidates from four (4) different sports. This is to ensure that the diversity of the Olympic Programme is reflected within the IOC Athletes’ Commission. Only NOCs with an Athletes’ Commission can put forward a candidate. To be eligible, the candidates must have taken part in the Athens 2004 Games or be taking part in the Beijing 2008 Games.

Each athlete will receive a manual (pictured left) in which the roles and responsibilities of the Athletes’ Commission are explained and in which the profiles of the 30 candidates are featured. Voting offices will be set up in Beijing from 5 to 20 August 2008, and in Hong Kong and Qingdao from 5 to 11 August 2008. Athletes in football host cities will also have the possibility to vote.

The results of the elections will be announced on 21 August 2008 at 2 p.m. in the “Amphitheatre” of the International Zone of the Beijing Olympic Village. The new IOC Athletes’ Commission members will be officially introduced during the Closing Ceremony of the Games.

4 NAMES, 4 SPORTS, 4 YOUR FUTURE
HIV is everybody’s responsibility
In 2007, around 33.2 million people were living with HIV and 2.1 million died of AIDS-related diseases. Sports people have not been spared by this epidemic. Most people infected with HIV do not know that they have become infected, although they can transmit the virus to others.

Refrain from risky behaviour (unprotected sex and sharing needles/syringes) — Limit your risks of contracting HIV. Pick up an HIV prevention package at any Olympic Village clinic during the Games, which includes HIV information and two condoms.

Help educate the public and young people — your voice as an athlete can be a very effective way to drive home messages about HIV prevention, care and support as you are regarded as a role model by young people and the public at large. A number of committed sports champions, including some who are HIV-positive, have helped raise HIV awareness in their community and country, and throughout the world. Your contribution will also be very valuable and can make a real difference.

“As a true Olympian — show the spirit of responsibility, friendship and fair play. Stop HIV — Stop the discrimination — and let everybody be part of the game.”

Rania Elwani (pictured below), Egyptian swimmer and member of the IOC and the IOC Athletes’ Commission.

To learn more on how you can help, contact the IOC Department of International Cooperation and Development
Tel +41 21 621 61 11 Fax: +41 21 621 63 54
e-mail: ornelia.lardaruccio@olympic.org

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ARE YOU A TEAM PLAYER?

Then join our world-wide winning team by donating your clean sports and casual clothing to those that are in need. Your clothing will be donated to thousands of refugees around the world so that they too can experience the joy of sport.

Please deposit your donation at the Beijing Olympic Village in the receptacle at the IOC Corner “The Best of Us” (Residential zone, next to the main dining hall).

REPRESENTING ATHLETES ON THE IOC ETHICS COMMISSION

All those taking part in the Olympic Games must respect the rules of Ethics.
This means that individual and team competitors, every delegation member, referees and jury members and all other accredited people must respect and ensure respect of the IOC Code of Ethics. For example, there may be no discrimination of any sort among the participants; all forms of harassment of participants, be it physical, professional or sexual, are prohibited; and participants must not act in a manner likely to tarnish the reputation of the Olympic Movement.

What is more, since 2006, all forms of participation in, or support for betting related to the Olympic Games, and all forms of promotion of betting related to the Olympic Games have been prohibited.

If you have the slightest doubt about betting on the Olympic Games or anything that might risk tarnishing the image of sport, do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Commission Secretary; your message will be treated in confidence.

Additional information can be found at the following address: www.olympic.org/ethics.

During the period of the Olympic Games, the Ethics Commission Secretary will be at your disposal for any confidential consultation by sending an e-mail to the address specially created for the Olympic family from 25 July to 28 August 2008: ethics@olympic.org.

Right: Pernilla Wiberg, IOC Member and IOC Athletes’ Commission member, your representative on the IOC Ethics Commission.